

Today's News - Friday, July 16, 2010

EDITOR'S NOTE: Just a reminder that we're three hours behind home base for this week and next, so newsletter will be arriving a bit later than usual.

- Leddy says it's time to go beyond awards and ratings that separate great design and sustainable design "to a new age of truly responsive, responsible design."
- In the Great Recession, cities start taking public transit infrastructure seriously.
- Saffron cheers plans for a new public plaza in Philadelphia that will prove "the power of good landscape design to redeem our most boosterish impulses."
- Cornell taps third Pritzker-winner to design a new building.
- Rahway, NJ, plans two new arts spaces (not all are pleased).
- Q&A with de Botton and his plans "to send a nation of vacationers to architectural rehab" (great slide show).
- Two we couldn't resist: a tree house "for design nerds to live out their Swiss Family Robinson fantasies" opens for business near the Arctic Circle + NYC's Park Ave. to get dumpster swimming pools!
- Weekend diversions:
- It's a year of Rietveld at the Centraal Museum Utrecht (great site).
- A whole lot of Holl on view in Lecce, Italy.
- 2010 California Design Biennial in Pasadena includes architecture for the first time.
- Pesce in the spotlight in L.A.
- Q&A with Adjaye re: his exhibition in Brussels.
- Webb "basks in the glow" of Hines's "Architecture of the Sun."
- Bruegmann's treatise on Harry Weese "could restore him to the place of honor he deserves" (great slide show, too).
- Sardar finds an interesting subtext in "Knoll: A Modernist Universe."

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Op-Ed: Getting Past Green: William Leddy wants to get past awards and ratings and plaques to a new age of truly responsive, responsible design...the popular conception of architecture itself remains divided into separate categories: great design and sustainable design...we can no longer afford this false distinction. -- Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects - The Architect's Newspaper

In a New Decade, During a New Recession, Cities are Going Back to Public Transit: In the midst of the Great Recession, civic leaders, developers, and designers are relearning old lessons: Investment in public transit infrastructure is an investment in economic development. -- HGA; Ratio Architects; Beyer Blinder Belle [images, links] - AIArchitect

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts offers promising plans for a plaza: Architecture challenges us in different ways. Simply by offering conventioners a gateway to an authentic urban experience, Lenfest Plaza demonstrates the power of good landscape design to redeem our most boosterish impulses. By Inga Saffron -- Claes Oldenburg; Olin [images] - Philadelphia Inquirer

Thom Mayne, Morphosis to design Gates Hall, new home for Computing and Information Science...CIS building will be the third Cornell building in the last five years designed by a Pritzker Prize-winning architect...schematic design is expected in December... -- Rem Koolhaas; Richard Meier; Gilbert Delgado - Cornell Chronicle

Rahway hires architects for two new arts spaces: ...an outdoor amphitheater and...a black box and dance theater...Residents who live across the street from the property expressed mixed emotions... -- Farewell Mills Gatsch Architects - The Star-Ledger (New Jersey)

Newsmaker: Alain de Botton: ...the crumbling country cottage...enjoys a powerful grip on the British psyche, a condition that, he argues, has led to a lot of bad design...To promote the value of modernism to an often-skeptical British populace...he formed Living Architecture...bit by bit de Botton hopes to send a nation of vacationers to architectural rehab. -- MVRDV; Peter Zumthor; Hopkins; NORD; Jarmund/Vigsnæs Architects/JVA [slide show] - Architectural Record

\$575 a Night Treehouse Hotel, Open for Business: Finally, a place for design nerds to live out their Swiss Family Robinson fantasies. -- Tham & Videgård [images] - Fast Company

Remaking Park Ave. Into a Spot to Splash: For the first three Saturdays in August, the city will open long, narrow, portable pools - converted Dumpsters - on Park Avenue. -- Janette Sadik-Khan; Macro-Sea; Vamos Architects [image] - New York Times

Rietveld Year & Rietveld Universe: a special year of unique programming celebrating and examining the life and work of visionary Utrecht-born architect and designer Gerrit Th. Rietveld (1888-1964). [images, links] - Centraal Museum Utrecht (Netherlands)

A Survey of Steven Holl's Architecture Comes to an Italian Castle: ...a survey of his recent European and Chinese projects at the 16th-century castle of Acaya in Lecce, Italy..."Su Pietra"...through January 15 — is an ambitious detailing of Holl's design process... [images] - Artinfo

2010 California Design Biennial: "Action/Reaction" highlights the most significant and innovative designs being created in California...first year that architecture is being included as a category. -- Stewart Reed/Transportation Design, Art Center College of Design; Frances Anderton/KCRW; Alissa Walker; Greene and Greene; Charles and Ray Eames; Fuseproject; Safdie Rabines Architects; Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects (LOHA) - Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA)

"Gaetano Pesce: Pieces From A Larger Puzzle" at the Italian Cultural Institute in Los Angeles...the first of the iconoclastic designer's work to be shown on the West Coast...a comprehensive overview of [his] remarkable 40-year career and includes prototypes, production models and rarely seen video footage. [image, links] - New York Times

Drawing inspiration from African houses: Q&A with David Adjaye, artistic director of the "GEO-graphics" exhibition at Brussels' Bozar Center (until Sept. 26), which re-maps Africa..."this is a way of starting to understand Africa with its thousand languages and 53 countries. It really all boils down to six regions, six centers with arts, urbanism and cultural life." [slide show] - GlobalPost

It Never Rains: "Architecture of the Sun: Los Angeles Modernism, 1900-1970" by Thomas S. Hines: A new catalogue of Los Angeles modernism outshines all the mega-scrapbooks, and Michael Webb basks in the glow -- Irving Gill; Frank Lloyd Wright; Schindler; Neutra; Lautner; Welton Beckett; Robert V. Derrah; William Pereira/Pereira & Luckman; A.C. Martin [images] - The Architect's Newspaper

Reconstructing Harry Weese: At his peak in the sixties and seventies, [he] was arguably Chicago's preeminent architect, a visionary...But his final years were marked by a sad, booze-saturated decline, and in time his reputation faded. Now...forthcoming "The Architecture of Harry Weese" by Robert Bruegmann could restore him to the place of honor he deserves [slide show] - Chicago Magazine

"Knoll: A Modernist Universe," by historian Brian Lutz honors designer Florence Knoll: ...shows how the company shaped interior design...An interesting subtext of the book is the link between Knoll and Cranbrook Academy of Art..."It is difficult to think of one without the other," says Reed Kroloff. By Zahid Sardar [images] - San Francisco Chronicle



Mikou Design Studio: Bailly School Complex, Saint-Denis, France

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